

State of North Carolina
Department of Environment
and Natural Resources
Division of Water Quality

James B. Hunt, Jr., Governor
Wayne McDevitt, Secretary
A. Preston Howard, Jr., P.E., Director



March 25, 1998

MEMORANDUM

To: Lisa Martin *Cyndi Bell*
Through: John Dorney *John Dorney*
From: Cyndi Bell
Subject: Environmental Assessment for US 70, Havelock Bypass
Craven County
State Project No. 8.T170701, T.I.P. No. R-1015; DENR #98-0539, DWQ#11988

The referenced document has been reviewed by this office. The Division of Water Quality (DWQ) is responsible for the issuance of the Section 401 Water Quality Certification for activities which impact waters of the state including wetlands. The proposed work will involve fill in up to 168 acres of wetlands. Potential impacts to perennial streams were not quantified in the EA. Overall, the EA provides balanced information with respect to the three Build Alternatives. There are several issues that we suggest that DOT should keep in mind during further planning and design work, and should address in the FONSI as much as possible.

- 1) DOT has identified Alternative 3 as the Preferred Alternative. DWQ agrees that of the three major practical alternatives, Alternative 3 will be least damaging to wetlands and water quality.
- 2) We are encouraged by DOT's efforts to develop a wetland mitigation plan at this stage in the planning process. We ask DOT to continue with development of this plan, so that more details can be included in the FONSI. Optimally, the mitigation plan should be completely developed and included with the permit application, so that construction of the mitigation site can be implemented prior to or concurrent with the construction of the highway project. NCDOT is also advised that, in accordance with DWQ Wetland Rules {15A NCAC 2H.0506(h)(2)}, the Wetland Restoration Program will be available to use for wetland mitigation.
- 3) DOT has identified the three major stream crossings in the project area; however, a complete listing of all perennial streams is needed for DWQ to complete our review. We presume that this project will involve new culvert crossings at numerous locations throughout the project corridor, regardless of the alternative selected. The potential linear distances of these stream impacts should be included in the FONSI. It would be

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